

July 9, 2025

Sycamore Grove Cattle Grazing Project

Good Afternoon Director Furst and Director Faltings, and Staff,

Thank you for your years of service on the LARPD Board.

My name is Patricia Moore, I've lived in Livermore for 25 years and have been a contractor with the District for most of those years, teaching here in the Rec. Center. I appreciate the many programs that have been developed for the Livermore community.

I live near Sycamore Grove and it is my 'go to' park for hiking several times per week. I am concerned about the introduction of the cattle onto the newer upper part of the park. At first it seemed like a good idea when there was plentiful green grass to be eaten. I assumed that the cattle herd would be seasonally removed or culled as everything dried up in the summer.

But no. After a two+ week hiatus for personal vacation and business, I was appalled to return to the upland park last week and see that the cattle, concentrated in the scenic Wagon Wheel loop, were devastating the landscape. I felt like an intruder on an overgrazed 'cattle ranch' during my 80 minute hike, which I've done hundreds of times.

I can appreciate the District's goals for fire protection, habitat conservation and invasive plant management. And the new signs paint a very rosy picture of the project. However, I believe that the reality of what is taking place, perhaps **overgrazing**, needs to be assessed by experienced biologists, naturalists, rangeland professionals.

There are new cattle trails everywhere, including along the gravel roads. The trees have been eaten up to cattle head-height. They are eating every last green morsel at this point, including young oaks and the coyote bushes south of the pond. All vegetation is gone from around the formerly pleasant resting benches. There is cow poop everywhere.

The lovely pond with turtles is now filthy muddy, with few turtles. Cattail pond was part of a \$425,000 riparian restoration project funded by the Coastal

Conservancy in 2007. It seems that the whole restoration area along the Wagon Wheel loop is now being devastated.

I went on this hike on a windy morning last week and dust was blowing across the field from an area devoid of vegetation, where 50+ cattle were concentrated under a few oak trees. What kind of mud hole will this be in the rainy season?

Further along I had to go 'off trail' to avoid several cows coming my way on the fire road, since I was by myself and had a bad experience with cattle at Del Valle some years ago.

Right now, I am asking Board Members to take a walk or a ride with a Ranger up and around the new 'cattle ranch' to see what is happening. I have taken many pictures, and regret that I do not have BEFORE and AFTER shots to compare. This part of the park is no longer user-friendly to your constituents in my opinion.

Was an environmental impact study done before this plan was implemented?

What exactly is your Rangeland Management Plan?

Do you have a Rangeland Management Professional who is overseeing this project? Someone like Clayton Koopmann who manages 40,000 acres of nearby land in Alameda Creek Watershed for the San Francisco PUC.

I would like to know the amount of acreage that is allotted to each cow in the park's grazing area. Will the land will be occupied by cattle year round? Will the number of cattle be reduced or culled during the dry season? Will ranchers be travelling the ever-widening roads to bring supplemental hay or feed for the cattle to eat during our long dry summer?

Please put this matter on the agenda for further investigation and discussion.

Thank You, Patricia Moore

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References:

Clayton Koopmann

Koopmann Rangeland Consulting

<https://koopmannfamilybeef.com/pages/about>

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See Project Number 06-042-01

<https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/0e5226ae75424ee995ffa6ada9bdf5ac/>

